

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are currently pending. In an Office Action dated September 29, 2006, the Examiner requires Applicant to elect a single invention to which the claims shall be restricted under 35 U.S.C. 121.

Particularly, the Examiner identifies:

Group I, Claims 2-6 and 15, drawn to a device for transporting metallic workpieces utilizing a transport device float-mounted on a carriage by elastic floating elements; and

Group II, Claims 7-14 and 16, drawn to a device for transporting metallic workpieces utilizing an insulated and vacuum tight transport chamber.

In reply to the restriction requirement, Applicants herein elect Group I, Claims 2-6 and 15 *with traverse of the non-allowance of the linking claim 1*. Notwithstanding the present election with traverse, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the withdrawn claims in a related application(s) without prejudice.

Prosecution on the merits is respectfully requested. The foregoing is believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action.

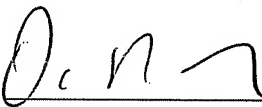
The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the below-listed phone number regarding this Response or otherwise concerning the present application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any necessary extension of time required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.136(a) or 1.136(b) which may be required for entry and consideration of the present Reply.

If there are any charges due with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicant's attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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